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ABSTRACT

These Colorado state civics content standards summarize the knowledge and skills that are the basis of responsible citizenship whether it is taught in history, geography, or other social studies courses. The guide points out that civics should be a central concern from kindergarten through twelfth grade. It is through systematic instruction in civics and government that young people develop and apply the intellectual and participatory skills that result in an understanding of what government of the people, by the people, and for the people really means. Students acquire the skills to think critically about a policy issue and become competent participators in the political process. The four content standards for civics are: (1) to understand the purposes of government and the basic constitutional principles of the U.S. republican form of government; (2) to know the structure and function of local, state, and national government and how citizen involvement shapes public policy; (3) to know the political relationship of the United States and its citizens to other nations and to world affairs; and (4) to understand how citizens exercise the roles, rights, and responsibilities of participation in civic life at the local, state, and national levels. Each standard presents a rationale, contains subdivisions, and lists specific educational objectives for grades K-4, grades 5-8, and grades 9-12. The guide also contains an extensive glossary of terms. (BT)

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COLORADO

MODEL CONTENT STANDARDS

CIVICS

Adopted September 10, 1998

INTRODUCTION

Colorado Model Content Standards for Civics

Public education in the United States of America has a civic purpose: to prepare informed, and participative citizens committed to the preservation of the constitutional republic* of the United States. While family, churches, media, and many other institutions share in this responsibility, schools fill a very important role in developing civic competence by providing education about the core principles embodied in the foundational documents that define the United States system of government.

Civic education can be a common bond to unite the people of the United States, representing religions, languages, ages, and ethnicities. The civic culture that defines the United States can be sustained as long as each generation develops a deep understanding and commitment to the principles of our founding documents. The Declaration of Independence, Constitution, Bill of Rights, and Federalist papers provide a basis for helping citizens to resolve differences and address increasingly complex policy issues.

Civics should be a central concern from kindergarten through twelfth grade, whether it is taught in history, geography, and other social studies courses, or in separate units or courses. It is through systematic instruction in civics and government that young people develop and apply the intellectual and participatory skills that result in understanding what government of the people, by the people, and for the people really means.

Intellectual skills in civics and government are inseparable from content. To be able to think critically about a policy issue, one must have an understanding of the issue, its history, and its contemporary relevance as well as a set of intellectual tools. These intellectual tools include the ability to evaluate positions, and to construct and justify positions on policy issues.

Citizenship skills are required for competent participation in the political process. These include the capacity to influence policies and decisions by working with others, clearly articulating interests and making them known to key decision and policy makers, building coalitions, negotiating, compromising, seeking consensus, and managing conflicts.

Civic education should be engaging and dynamic. Schools should help students develop an understanding of the content as well as the intellectual and participatory skills in both the formal and informal curriculum. Students will benefit from opportunities to take part in the politics* and governance of their classrooms and schools, participate in simulations of activities of government (for example, legislative hearings and judicial procedures), observe governmental agencies at work, learn how members of government and private organizations attempt to influence public policy*, and meet with public officials to advocate their positions.

The standards outlined in this document summarize the knowledge and skills that are the basis of responsible citizenship. As the next generation interacts with the content of these standards, they will prepare to positively shape civic traditions of Colorado and the United States.

Historically, the United States system of government was created as a "republic." Most people in the United States today think of the system as a "democracy." Much time could be spent debating whether the United States system of government is a republic or a democracy. At the time the United States system of government was drawn up, the nation did not have a democracy. It had a republic. It did not have a democracy because people of certain color could not vote, and women could not participate as well. Now the nation has one of the truest democracies in existence. Very few people cannot participate in the democratic process, for example, those who are incarcerated. Democracy means the ability to vote and the right to vote if you meet the age, residency requirements, etc. Republic refers to the ability of citizens to elect representatives to act on behalf of our views. Thus, the United States is truly a democratic republic.

Colorado Model Content Standards

CIVICS

1. Students understand the purposes of government, and the basic constitutional principles* of the United States republican form of government.

2. Students know the structure and function of local, state, and national government and how citizen involvement shapes public policy.

3. Students know the political relationship of the United States and its citizens to other nations and to world affairs.

4. Students understand how citizens exercise the roles, rights and responsibilities of participation in civic life* at all levels - local, state and national.

* A glossary of terms can be found at the end of this document.

STANDARD 1: Students understand the purposes of government, and the basic constitutional principles* of the United States republican form of government.

RATIONALE

Citizens need to understand different ideas about civic life, politics*, and government so that they can make informed judgments, decisions and actions about the role of government. Understanding allows individuals to analyze the advantages and disadvantages of the United States system, to evaluate issues related to its design and purposes, and to offer suggestions for change and improvement. The United States written constitution* sets forth the principles* upon which our government is based. The successful implementation of the constitutional system of the United States is dependent upon its citizens holding civic values* and principles* in common that constitute the political culture* of the United States and the founders' original intent. Citizens must understand the fundamental ideas of constitutional government*, its history, and contemporary relevance to develop a reasoned commitment to constitutionalism and rule of law*. Citizens can use these understandings as criteria to evaluate the performance of government officials and to gauge their own effectiveness as citizens.*

1.1 Students know and understand what government is and what purpose it serves.

Grades K-4

In grades K-4, what students know and are able to do includes

- describing the purposes of government;
- describing what life would be like without laws and order; and
- identifying a constitution as a framework for a government.

Grades 5-8

As students in grades 5-8 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- explaining major ideas about why government is necessary (*for example, promote the common good*, protect individual rights*, safety, order*);
- describing how the United States Constitution limits the power* of government; and
- comparing and contrasting various ideas about the purposes of government.

Grades 9-12

As students in grades 9-12 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- explaining how purposes of government impact the individual and society;
- analyzing how different forms of government execute the purposes of government; and
- analyzing and knowing how different forms of government impact the individual (*for example, personal freedom and political liberty*).

1.2 Students know the essential characteristics of limited* and unlimited government*.

Grades K-4

In grades K-4, what students know and are able to do includes

- giving examples of people using power* and people using authority* (*for example, school crossing guards have authority to direct traffic, while bullies have power, but not authority);* and
- explaining why the power* of a government should be limited (*for example, to limit the misuse or abuse of power).*

Grades 5-8

As students in grades 5-8 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- comparing limited* and unlimited government*;
- describing different types of government, limited*, unlimited* and absence of government (*for example, anarchy, oligarchy, constitutional republic*, authoritarian*, democratic and totalitarian*);* and
- explaining how rule of law* differs from arbitrary decisions of a leader.

Grades 9-12

As students in grades 9-12 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- comparing and contrasting limited* and unlimited government* (*for example, constitutional republic*, authoritarian*, and totalitarian government*);*
- comparing how constitutions* promote the principles* of a political system and provide the basis for government; and
- describing how constitutions* and the rule of law* may limit government.

1.3 Students understand the principles* of the United States constitutional government*.

Grades K-4

In grades K-4, what students know and are able to do includes

- identifying the function of the United States Constitution* (*for example, establishes the rules of the United States government*); and
- giving examples of rights protected by a constitution* (*for example, U.S. Bill of Rights, the state constitution).*

Grades 5-8

As students in grades 5-8 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- explaining the historical foundation of the United States constitutional government* (*for example, the influence of the Roman Republic, Magna Carta, colonial experience, the Declaration of Independence, Articles of Confederation, the importance of the natural rights* philosophy, and social contract**);
- explaining the essential principles of government stated in the United States Constitution (*for example, the purposes of government as stated in the Preamble, limited government*, separation of powers*, checks and balances* of legislative*, executive* and judicial* branches, federalism* and rule of law*);*
- identifying individual rights* protected by the Bill of Rights; and
- developing and defending positions* on current issues involving constitutional protection of individual rights*.

Grades 9-12

As students in grades 9-12 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- analyzing the political thought that influenced the development of the United States Constitution (*for example, social contract* theory, the major ideas of republicanism*, natural rights* philosophy);*
- evaluating the Federalist and Anti-Federalist positions in the context of contemporary United States society;
- explaining how the United States Constitution is a vehicle for continuity and preserving liberty, yet allows for change; and
- explaining the conditions which are necessary for the United States constitutional government* to operate effectively (*for example, the acceptance of or commitment to common constitutional principles*).*

1.4 Students know the distinctive characteristics of the political culture* of the United States.

Grades K-4

In grades K-4, what students know and are able to do includes

- explaining the importance of respect for individuals, property, rule of law, and civic responsibility.

Grades 5-8

As students in grades 5-8 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- explaining how the shared political principles* of the United States Constitution affect citizens (*for example, shared political principles* could be liberty*, equality, justice*, patriotism*, limited government**);
- developing, evaluating, and defending positions* on how shared political principles* have affected citizens;
- analyzing why conflicts arise, and ways in which conflicts can be resolved in a peaceful manner; and
- describing and analyzing the processes that have led to the expansion of rights for more people in the United States (*for example, abolition of slavery, women's suffrage, civil rights movement*).

Grades 9-12

As students in grades 9-12 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- analyzing how amendments, laws, and landmark decisions have helped fulfill the promise of the Constitution;
- analyzing the relationship between the Constitution and the political culture* in which it exists;
- developing, evaluating, and defending positions* about the importance of adhering to constitutional principles* in managing conflicts over diverse viewpoints (*for example, taxation, civil rights, and balance of power*); and
- developing, evaluating, and defending positions* on the effectiveness of the Constitution and Bill of Rights in protecting the rights of all citizens.

1.5 Students know the fundamental democratic principles* inherent in the United States concept of a constitutional democratic republic*.

Grades K-4

In grades K-4, what students know and are able to do includes

- identifying traditional ideas of representative government of the United States (*for example, individual rights*, common or public good, self-government, justice*, equality of opportunity)*; and
- giving examples of traditional principles* of representative government of the United States (*for example, people are sovereign*, government power* is limited, exercise of authority* directly by voting, indirect authority* by representation*, majority rule*, and minority rights* protected).*

Grades 5-8

As students in grades 5-8 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- explaining the meaning and importance of each of the following traditional principles* of representative government - individual rights* (*for example, the rights to life, liberty*, and property)*, the common good*, self-government, justice*, and equality; and
- identifying and applying to contemporary situations the fundamental principles* of representative government of the United States (*for example, rule by consent of the people, representative democracy*, rule of law*, the importance of citizen participation, limited government*, balancing individual and social needs, majority rule* and minority rights*).*

Grades 9-12

As students in grades 9-12 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- developing and defending positions* on issues in which traditional principles* of representative government are in conflict, using historical and contemporary examples (*for example, conflicts between liberty* and equality, between individual rights* and the common good*);*
- developing, evaluating, and defending positions* about historical and contemporary efforts to act according to constitutional principles (*for example, abolition movement, desegregation of schools, civil rights movements*); and
- developing, evaluating, and defending positions* on contemporary issues on the balance between individual rights* and the common good*.

STANDARD 2: Students know the structure and function of local, state, and national government and how citizen involvement shapes public policy.

RATIONALE

Preservation of the United States constitutional system requires the participation of an attentive and knowledgeable citizenry. An understanding of political process and the Constitution enhances responsible participation. Law pervades United States society; it is the mechanism through which policy is expressed and debated, disputes resolved, and government limited. When citizens participate by evaluating, monitoring, and influencing policy at the local, state, and national levels, our system will thrive and continue.

2.1 Students know the organization and functions of local, state, and national governments.

Grades K-4

In grades K-4, what students know and are able to do includes

- identifying what governments do in their school, community, state, and nation*; what services they provide; and how we pay for them.

Grades 5-8

As students in grades 5-8 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- explaining major responsibilities of national, state, and local governments;
- explaining the rationale for taxes and the purposes for which taxes are used;
- identifying their representatives in the legislative branches*, heads of executive*, and judicial branches*; and
- explaining which level of government they should contact to get information, express their opinions or get help on specific issues.

Grades 9-12

As students in grades 9-12 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- analyzing how the organization of the local, state, and national governments influences the formulation and implementation of policy *(for example, weak versus strong mayoral system, unicameral* versus bicameral legislature*, legislative approval of presidential appointments)*;
- explaining why states have their own constitutions* and the relationship of state constitutions to the federal constitution *(for example, the "roots" of colonial assemblies,*

strong state governments);

- evaluating the tension between citizens' desire for government services and benefits, and the costs associated with providing those; and
- describing major provisions of the Colorado Constitution.

2.2 Students know how power*, authority*, and responsibility are distributed, shared, and limited through federalism* as established by the United States Constitution.

Grades K-4

In grades K-4, what students know and are able to do includes

- identifying limits of authority* for the self, school, community, state.

Grades 5-8

As students in grades 5-8 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- explaining how the Constitution divides the powers* of government among the executive*, legislative*, and judicial branches*, and how each branch can check the powers* of another; and
- explaining how and why powers* are distributed between local, state, and national governments (*for example, shared power such as to tax, borrow money, regulate voting; functions primarily exercised by state governments, such as education, law enforcement, highways; and distribution of power reflects the value of local decision-making and local control).*

Grades 9-12

As students in grades 9-12 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- analyzing how the design of the United States Constitution balances and checks to prevent the abuse of power* (*for example, Marbury v. Madison, Supreme Court packing under New Deal, Watergate)*; and
- developing, evaluating, and defending positions* on historical and contemporary conflicts over the respective roles, balance of power*, and responsibility between local, state, and federal government.

2.3 Students know and understand the place of law in the Colorado and United States constitutional systems.

Grades K-4

In grades K-4, what students know and are able to do includes

- identifying people and groups who apply and enforce rules and laws as government (*for example, police, judges, legislatures, mayors, principals);*
- explaining why we have classroom and school rules; and
- identifying what makes a good rule or law.

Grades 5-8

As students in grades 5-8 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- identifying types of law: juvenile, criminal, civil, and explaining how law protects individual rights* and promotes the common good*;
- evaluating strengths and weaknesses of a rule or law;
- describing alternative means of conflict management, including negotiation*, mediation*, arbitration*, and litigation*; and
- explaining the role and importance of the Bill of Rights in the Colorado and United States constitutional systems (*for example, Supreme Court cases such as Tinker v. Des Moines, Miranda v. Arizona, Gideon v. Wainwright, TLO v. New Jersey).*

Grades 9-12

As students in grades 9-12 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- explaining the significance of historical and contemporary events to illustrate the central place of the rule of law* (*for example, United States Supreme Court cases such as United States v. Nixon, Mapp v. Ohio, Gideon v. Wainwright);*
- analyzing, using historical and contemporary examples, the meaning and significance of the idea of equal protection* of laws for all persons (*for example, Brown v. Board of Education, University of California v. Bakke);*
- explaining how the state and federal courts' power* of judicial review reflects the United States constitutional government* (*for example, Marbury v. Madison);* and
- developing, evaluating and defending positions* on current issues regarding judicial protection of individual rights* (*for example, explaining the basic concept of due process* protections, including presumption of innocence, speedy and public trials, right to counsel, trial by jury, right of appeal).*

2.4 Students know how public policy* is developed at the local, state, and national levels.

Grades K-4

In grades K-4, what students know and are able to do includes

- identifying how people monitor and influence decisions of their government *(for example, read, follow issues, have discussions, vote, and contact elected representatives).*

Grades 5-8

As students in grades 5-8 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- defining public policy* and identifying examples at local, state and national levels;
- describing how the public agenda* is shaped by political leaders, interest groups*, media, state and federal courts, and individual citizens;
- explaining how political parties*, campaigns, and elections influence policy formation;
- evaluating the role of the media and public opinion in formulating public policy*; and
- explaining how changing demographics affect civic responsibility.

Grades 9-12

As students in grades 9-12 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- evaluating the contemporary roles of voters, political parties*, associations, and groups in local, state, and national politics* *(for example, political action committees, interest groups*, think tanks, unions, professional organizations)*;
- analyzing a current public policy* issue at local, state, or national levels and evaluating the alternative positions *(for example, welfare reform)*;
- explaining why conflicts within traditional principles* of representative government may make agreement on issues of public policy* difficult *(for example, affirmative action, gun control, environmental protection, capital punishment, growth, welfare reform)*; and
- developing, evaluating, and defending positions* about the role of media and public opinion in United States politics* *(for example, ways that government and media influence public opinion and the behavior of public officials).*

STANDARD 3: Students know the political relationship of the United States and its citizens to other nations and to world affairs.

RATIONALE

The United States is part of an interconnected world, where the actions of one nation can affect the well-being of other nations. To make judgments about the role of the United States in the world today, citizens need to be able to determine what course their foreign policy* should take. An understanding of the role of the United States in the world arena and the processes by which foreign policy* is made and implemented provides the necessary foundation for making judgments about the direction of United States foreign policy*. To take part in analyzing and evaluating proposals for dealing with international issues, citizens need to be aware of worldwide developments and their effects.*

3.1 Students know how and why governments and nongovernmental agencies around the world interact politically.

Grades K-4

In grades K-4, what students know and are able to do includes

- identifying examples of international issues.

Grades 5-8

As students in grades 5-8 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- defining foreign policy* and describing ways that nations interact with one another diplomatically *(for example, trade, treaties, humanitarian aid, military force).*

Grades 9-12

As students in grades 9-12 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- identifying and analyzing the effectiveness of solutions used to resolve an international problem or concern by governmental and nongovernmental agencies (*for example, United Nations attempts to resolve political conflicts, attempts to deal with world-wide refugee problems, terrorism, attempts to protect the world's environment*).

3.2 Students understand how the United States government develops foreign policy*.

Grades K-4

In grades K-4, what students know and are able to do includes

- identifying examples of how the United States interacts with other countries *(for example, trade and culture).*

Grades 5-8

As students in grades 5-8 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- explaining the powers* the United States Constitution gives to the branches of government in foreign policy*;
- identifying current foreign policy* issues and evaluating the geopolitical strategies the United States is using to deal with them;
- describing ways in which citizens can influence the formation of foreign policy; and
- explaining the relationship between United States foreign policy and national interest.

Grades 9-12

As students in grades 9-12 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- analyzing how and why domestic politics* may impose constraints or obligations on the ways in which the United States acts in the world, giving current political examples *(for example, understanding treaties and their relationship to the Constitution)*; and
- identifying and analyzing issues concerning the national interests of the United States.

3.3 Students understand the domestic and foreign policy influence the United States has on other nations and how the actions of other nations influence politics* and society of the United States.

Grades K-4

In grades K-4, what students know and are able to do includes

- describing ways in which the United States and other countries politically influence each other *(for example, making a treaty, trade).*

Grades 5-8

As students in grades 5-8 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- giving examples of how foreign policy decisions made by the United States government regarding other countries have affected lives of United States citizens (*for example, the Gulf War, tariffs, embargoes)*;
- describing the influence of United States political ideas on other nations and the influence of other nations' ideas on the United States;
- describing diplomatic strategies in which agencies of the United States government have sought to help resolve an international problem and/or pursue our national interest or concern (*for example, American diplomats have sought to mediate disputes in Bosnia, Northern Ireland, and the Middle East, participation of United States government officials in international conferences on the environment or population, sending humanitarian aid to countries in conflict*); and
- describing ways in which nongovernmental agencies and organizations have sought to help with an international problem or concern (*for example, the Red Cross helping victims of war or natural disasters, organizations of doctors or scientists helping with diseases or disasters like Chernobyl).*

Grades 9-12

As students in grades 9-12 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- evaluating the impact of significant international developments on the United States and other nations (*for example, impact of land mines*);
- describing the impact abroad of the principles* of the Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution;
- giving examples of how foreign policy decisions made by foreign countries affect the United States;
- giving examples of diplomatic strategies used by the United States government when interacting on significant international issues (*for example, humanitarian and development aid, economic sanctions)*;
- evaluating current international issues in which the foreign policy* of the United States has played a significant role (*for example, world trade negotiations - GATT agreements*); and
- identifying opportunities for citizens of the United States to participate in the resolution of international problems and concerns (*for example, citizens pressure to release the remains of POWs from Vietnam).*

STANDARD 4: Students understand how citizens exercise the roles, rights and responsibilities of participation in civic life* at all levels - local, state, and national.

RATIONALE

In order to function effectively as citizens, it is essential that students understand the nature of citizenship and the roles that citizens must play. Citizenship in the United States brings with it rights and responsibilities both at the personal and public levels, including the responsibility to be informed regarding matters of public policy. Citizens who know about and exercise rights and responsibilities ensure that the constitutional republic* of the United States is preserved. Informed voting is commonly perceived as the major way in which citizens can participate in government. Students should understand the many other ways that they can participate in civic life* on an ongoing basis. Understanding and commitment to exercising the roles and skills related to citizenship, students can help influence and shape public policy* and contribute to the maintenance of our way of life.*

4.1 Students know what citizenship is.

Grades K-4

In grades K-4, what students know and are able to do includes

- identifying the criteria for citizenship in the United States; and
- explaining how students are citizens in the classroom, school, community, and state *(for example, civic virtue, common courtesy, and honest and fair dealings).*

Grades 5-8

As students in grades 5-8 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- explaining the meaning of citizenship in the United States;
- describing how to become a citizen in the United States (*for example, the process of naturalization);* and
- identifying significant characteristics of an effective citizen (*for example, civic virtue, common courtesy, respect for person and property, civic and personal responsibility, and honest and fair dealings).*

Grades 9-12

As students in grades 9-12 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- explaining the rights and obligations of United States citizens;
- comparing and analyzing the rights and responsibilities of citizens and non-citizens in the United States; and
- evaluating the usefulness of the following characteristics of an effective citizen to participate effectively in public life (*for example, civic virtue, common courtesy, respect for person and property, civic and personal responsibility, and honest and fair dealings).*

4.2 Students know how citizens can fulfill their responsibilities for preserving the constitutional republic*.

Grades K-4

In grades K-4, what students know and are able to do includes

- giving examples of civic responsibilities that are important to themselves, their families, community, and state; and
- identifying important characteristics of an effective citizen that help preserve and strengthen the United States constitutional republic* (*for example, being involved, informed).*

Grades 5-8

As students in grades 5-8 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- identifying civic responsibilities (*for example, accepting responsibility for the consequences of one's actions as a citizen, considering the rights and interests of others, voting, obeying the law, paying taxes, performing voluntary public service, jury service, serving in the armed forces)*;
- identifying contemporary issues that involve civic responsibilities and analyzing various positions on those responsibilities (*for example, accepting responsibility for the consequences of one's actions, considering the rights and interests of others, voting, obeying the law, paying taxes, performing voluntary public service, jury service, serving in the armed forces)*; and
- analyzing the implications of not fulfilling citizen responsibilities.

Grades 9-12

As students in grades 9-12 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- evaluating whether and when their obligations as citizens require that their personal desires and interests be balanced with the public good;
- evaluating what to do when individual beliefs or constitutional principles* are in conflict; and
- identifying and evaluating how the characteristics of an effective citizen promote the preservation of the republic.

4.3 Students know how citizens can exercise their rights.

Grades K-4

In grades K-4, what students know and are able to do includes

- identifying important individual economic, personal, and political rights (*for example, freedom of religion, freedom of speech, right to own property).*

Grades 5-8

As students in grades 5-8 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- distinguishing between personal and political rights (*for example, freedom of religion, freedom of speech, right to own property)*;
- identifying and analyzing responses to situations involving historic and contemporary threats to the meaning of political rights (*for example, right to vote, petition, assembly)* as distinguished from personal rights (*for example, free speech to express personal taste, freedom of conscience, freedom of movement, privacy rights)*;
- identifying and evaluating situations involving conflict between rights and proposing solutions to the conflict within the scope and limits of those rights; and
- using historical and legal sources of personal and political rights to defend the exercise of rights of citizens in a given situation (*for example, Declaration of Independence, Constitution, Bill of Rights, court decisions).*

Grades 9-12

As students in grades 9-12 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- identifying the scope and limits of rights (*for example, all rights have limits)*;
- explaining considerations and criteria commonly used in determining what limits should be placed on specific rights (*for example, clear and present danger, national security, public safety)*;
- evaluating different positions on contemporary issues that involve rights of citizens (*for example, restricted membership in organizations, sexual harassment, school prayer, refusal of medical care*); and
- describing and evaluating historical or current examples of citizen movements to ensure rights of all citizens.

4.4 Students know how citizens can participate in civic life*.

Grades K-4

In grades K-4, what students know and are able to do includes

- identifying ways in which they could take an active part in improving their school and community; and
- identifying criteria useful in selecting leaders within school.

Grades 5-8

As students in grades 5-8 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- explaining the meaning of civic life*, politics*, and government;
- identifying and applying criteria useful in selecting political leaders at local, state, and national levels;
- explaining how participation in civic and political life can help to solve problems; and
- describing how to influence public policy* in the politics* and governments of their own classrooms and schools.

Grades 9-12

As students in grades 9-12 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- evaluating the effectiveness of various forms of political participation (*for example, voting, attending political and governmental meetings, contacting public officials)*;
- describing various ways one can exercise leadership and participate in public affairs (*for example, campaigning);*
- demonstrating understanding of strategies for monitoring and influencing current public policy* (*for example, writing to a public official, writing letters to the editor, working with advocacy groups, working on a political campaign or using technology to monitor and influence legislation);* and
- describing the role of civil disobedience*.

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Federalist Papers.

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United States Constitution.

GLOSSARY

arbitration - Process by which the parties to a dispute submit their differences to the judgment of an impartial person or group appointed by mutual consent or statutory provision.

authoritarian government - System of rule in which the government recognizes no formal limits but may, nevertheless, be restrained by the power of other social institutions.

authority - Right to control or direct actions of others, because of law, morality, custom, or consent.

bicameral legislature - A legislature which has two legislative chambers.

checks and balances - Constitutional mechanisms that authorize each branch of government to share powers with the other branches and thereby check their activities. For example, the president may veto legislation passed by Congress, the Senate must confirm major executive appointments, and the courts may declare acts of Congress unconstitutional.

civic life - Public life of the citizen concerned with the affairs of the community and nation as contrasted with private or personal life, which is devoted to the pursuit of private and personal interests.

civic values - Individual rights including life, liberty, property, and the pursuit of happiness; the common or public good; self government; justice; equality; openness and free inquiry; truth; and patriotism.

civic virtue - Dedication of citizens to the common welfare, even at the cost of their individual interests.

civil disobedience - Refusal to obey civil laws regarded as unjust, usually by employing methods of passive resistance, and willingness to accept legal consequences.

common good - Benefit or interest of a politically organized society as a whole.

constitution - A written or unwritten plan for government.

constitutional government - System of rule in which formal and effective limits are placed on the powers of the government.

constitutional republic - System of government in which power is held by the voters and is exercised by elected representatives responsible for promoting the common welfare within the parameters of a constitution.

democracy - Form of government in which political control is exercised by all the people, either directly or through their elected representatives.

democratic republic - A term used to reflect that the United States form of government combines the best principles of both a democracy and a republic to limit the power of the government and to protect the inalienable rights of all individual citizens.

developing, evaluating, and defending positions - Students should be able to complete research and cite evidence for positions taken on historical or contemporary issues.

due process - Right of every citizen to be protected against arbitrary action by government. Every person involved in a legal dispute is entitled to a fair hearing.

equal protection - The state of having either comparable access to opportunity or results from condition education, employment, political participation, and similar areas.

executive branch - Branch of government that carries out the laws made by the legislative branch; and in the national government, makes treaties with foreign governments and conducts wars.

federalism - The division of power between the state and federal government. The federal government's powers to make laws are listed in the Constitution and the remaining powers are reserved for the states.

foreign policy - Policies of the federal government directed to matters beyond U.S. borders, especially relations with other countries. Much domestic policy has foreign policy implications.

individual rights - Rights possessed by individuals rather than those rights claimed by groups.

interest group - Organized body of individuals who share some goals and try to influence public policy to meet those goals.

judicial branch - Branch of government that interprets and applies the constitution and laws through a system of courts.

justice - Fair distribution of benefits and burdens, fair correction of wrongs and injuries, or use of fair procedures in gathering information and making decisions.

legislative branch - Branch of government that makes the laws; in the federal government, this is Congress; in the Colorado state government, this is the General Assembly.

liberty - Freedom from unjust or undue governmental control.

limited government - The constitutional principle that governmental power is limited through restrictions imposed by the Constitution.

litigation - Legal proceedings.

majority rule - Rule by more than half of those participating in a decision.

mediation - Act of resolving or settling differences by using an intermediary agent between two or more conflicting parties.

minority rights - Rights of any group less than a majority.

nation - Political organization that claims sovereignty over a defined territory and jurisdiction over the people in that territory.

natural rights - Belief that individuals are naturally endowed with basic human rights; those rights that are so much a part of human nature that they cannot be taken away or given up, as opposed to rights conferred by law. The Declaration of Independence states that these natural rights include the rights of "Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."

negotiation - Process of arranging or settling by conferring or discussing.

patriotism - Loyalty to one's country and its values and principles.

political culture - Fundamental beliefs and assumptions of a people about how government and politics should operate.

political party - Any group, however loosely organized, which seeks to elect government officials under a given label.

politics - Methods by which individuals and groups try to influence operations of government.

power - Ability or official capacity to exercise control; authority.

principles - Basic rules that guide or influence thought or action.

public agenda - Issues that command the attention of public officials.

public policy - Body of laws, rules, guidelines and court decisions by which an open society organizes and conducts its affairs.

representation - The right or privilege of being represented by delegates having a voice in a legislative body.

republic/republicanism - A form of government in which power is held by the people. The government is administered by officers elected by the people to serve their interests.

rule of law - Principle that every member of a society, even a ruler, must follow the law.

separation of powers - Division of governmental power among several institutions that must cooperate in decision making.

social contract - A theory developed by Locke to explain the origin of legitimate government. This theory posits agreement among all the people in a society to give up part of their freedom to a government in return for protection of their natural rights.

sovereign - A person or body of persons in whom the supreme power of the state is vested.

totalitarian government - Government in which one person or party exercises absolute control over all spheres of human life and opposing parties are not permitted to exist.

unicameral legislature - A legislature which has a single legislative chamber.

unlimited government - Governmental power not limited through constitutional restrictions.

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